

Pineview HOA Member  
HOA Address  
Maple Grove, MN 55369

August 18, 2025

Dear HOA Member,

## **Get Ready for \$750/Month HOA DUES ... Unless**

HOA board president, Robert E. Kraus, is getting ready to execute a Mail Ballot strategy to raise member dues to \$750 per month for the next 4-5 years for new siding on all twenty-one remaining HOA buildings. In a recent siding committee meeting, he provided the following direction to the siding committee tasked with convincing HOA members to approve a siding multi-year assessment vote.

"The board can propose separate assessments over multiple years to be presented to all members of the HOA for approval. The method of collecting the assessment, whether all at once, quarterly, or monthly, would be in the draft voted on by the members of the HOA. The [**multi-year**] **assessments** would be drafted and put to a vote by our governing documents," Bob Kraus, Pineview Board President.

### **If you don't vote, it will be counted as a YES vote.**

Kraus has sought two legal opinions, but only the first one has been shared. The first opinion revealed that the board could send us a certified **MAIL-IN-BALLOT** with a 15-day response window. However, a recent change in Minnesota Law states that all HOA members who do not return a valid **MAIL-IN-BALLOT** are counted as a Yes vote. This lack of transparency means you must understand the implications of not voting.

### **If you don't vote, it will be counted as a YES vote.**

I can understand the legal rationale, since it is often tough for non-profit HOAs to get their members to participate. Still, this is not a transparent Minnesota Law, which can allow HOAs to mislead and even dupe their members, imposing projects that would otherwise not be supported. Let me explain from the first lawyer's letter how this works. Instead of presenting this material for a discussion and vote at an in-person meeting, the HOA sends out a **MAIL-IN-BALLOT** with a 15-day deadline from the date it was mailed. Yes votes count, YES. No votes count, NO.

**Missing member MAIL-IN-BALLOTS count, YES.** Therefore, if you don't vote, you will unwittingly be voting for an estimated \$400 per month increase in your monthly HOA dues. The first legal opinion letter will be posted to my blog site at [www.pineview-hoa.org](http://www.pineview-hoa.org).

**At this time, nothing official has been formally voted on by the HOA board. However, a mail ballot strategy could happen as early as September 15 of this year. Alternatively, it will take place sometime next year.**

I share your concerns on several fronts. The impending street repaving next year, with estimated assessments of around \$5,000 per unit, the ability to sell or rent a townhome, and the need for window replacements for some HOA members, which are estimated at around \$14,000.

The most concerning aspect of Robert Kraus and the board's plan is the potential impact on our retired HOA members. It's a known fact that 30-50% of our HOA members are retired and live on social security benefits. Increasing HOA dues in this context is not acceptable. We are a community of people, not just a collection of 22 buildings. Mr. Kraus and other board members need to remember the people they are supposed to represent and consider their financial capabilities.

Rather than trying to put new siding on the remaining 21 buildings in 3-5 years, it would be better to do this in 7-10 years. That would mean new siding for only 2-3 buildings per year, as funds become available. Recently, the board has been committing \$120k or more to increasing the reserve fund. Cash on hand now is around \$500k. It doesn't make sense to continue such policies. Without increasing our current HOA dues, 2-3 homes could receive new siding each year. All that takes is to live within our means and the HOA's existing budget resources.

Last year, I received a siding estimate for our quad buildings from Osseo-based MEI of \$54,000/Unit. This estimate is on my blog site. This means that we could put new siding on two buildings a year without any monthly dues increase, simply by using funds that would otherwise have increased our reserve funds. **After all, isn't the reserve fund supposed to be used for HOA building needs like siding?**

\$10k of HOA funds was spent on an engineering analysis of the siding that recommends replacing the siding. The members of the siding committee are overwhelmingly ready to recommend replacing the siding. My siding is not that bad. However, for the sake of debate, let's assume that the HOA needs to start a new siding project to put new siding on the remaining 21 quad buildings.

That being the case, there is a great deal of cost difference between my recommendation of living within our means or current budget constraints, and siding 2-3 buildings per year, and Robert Kraus's idea of increasing our dues \$400 per month for 4-5 years by immediately trying to put new siding on all buildings. It doesn't make any sense to worry that some buildings will have different siding.

Playing the devil's advocate for a moment, our HOA has forced a 5% annual increase in our dues for many years. I have absolutely no confidence that a reduction in yearly dues would happen in the foreseeable future of our HOA. A wise man once stated that the only way to stop a governing body from spending money is to limit the amount of money they have to spend. Let's live within our current annual financial means and HOA budget constraints. Let's vote down additional dues increases and further special assessments.

## **If a Special Assessment Mail Ballot is received!**

1. Vote **NO** if you can't live with the monthly dues of \$750.
2. Vote **YES** if the increase in dues is better than living within our current budget.
3. **Do not skip voting**, as your missing ballot will count YES under MN Law.
4. Return your ballot by certified mail to prevent your ballot from being lost.

## **Destructive Communication Policies**

If I wanted to make life difficult and control HOA members, I would enact the following destructive policies that hinder effective communications. Most adults know that effective communication also involves body language that does not register on Zoom digital calls.

1. Do not post the board members' emails and phone numbers in our directory.
2. Require all communications with the HOA board to go through Omega Mgmt.
3. Refuse to allow HOA members to contact board members directly.
4. Establish Omega Management as a gatekeeper on maintenance issues.
5. Only allow Zoom meetings instead of face-to-face communications.
6. Have a process to post meeting minutes that takes months to get online.
7. Refuse to fully disclose material documents to regular HOA members.
8. Create a building-focused board priority instead of a community-focused one.

***Unfortunately, Robert Kraus has created all of the above destructive policies!***

## **Maintenance Difficulties & Delays**

We now have one quad building with new siding. However, most people don't realize that the homeowner asked the board to repair their siding for four years. Not until their back wall became a disaster did they take action to stop the leak inside the home. Other homeowners have reported similar difficulties and delays with other maintenance issues. In this month's Zoom meeting, one homeowner reported her building hadn't been painted in fifteen (15) years. So, board negligence has resulted in some minor maintenance issues becoming more severe and costly repairs.

## Q&A

Q1 - The composite siding used on many buildings is no longer available. Isn't that a good reason for new siding?

A1 - While the existing composite boards are no longer available, boards very close to them can be obtained. Once painted, they look just as good.

Q2 - Haven't we exceeded the life span of the existing siding?

A2 - According to some assessments, that is true. However, research indicates that our siding could last for 75 years if properly maintained. That means painting every 5-10 years, and repairing woodpecker holes in a timely fashion. Omega decided not to repair three holes in my north wall until spring, when they could have been patched in the fall. Their reasoning was to save up and "batch" several woodpecker holes to be repaired at the same time. This may be a reasonable cost strategy to repair woodpecker holes. Still, it is a poor maintenance strategy since failure to fix the holes allows for further siding and building deterioration.

Q3 - What if an entire wall of composite board needs to be replaced?

A3 - An entire wall can still be replaced, and once painted, it will look nice.

Q4 - If the engineering analysis of the siding indicates we should start replacing the siding and the siding committee recommends new siding, shouldn't we bite the bullet and replace all the siding, like Robert Kraus, HOA president, wants to?

A4 - Opinions are the cheapest commodity in the world, and everyone has one. I would be more impressed if 80% of the HOA units believed that they needed new siding. I've owned two homes in the past. The siding on my quad building does not need to be replaced. Having said that, I understand that there are claims that some of the quad buildings desperately need their siding replaced. Still, is it necessary to increase everyone's dues by \$400 per month for 3-5 years because some buildings need new siding or repairs?

## A Short Survey

So that I can better understand your individual household situation and our collective options, please fill out the short survey below and return it to me. The HOA siding committee may send its own survey; however, I don't know if or when that might happen. **Circle the answer that applies.**

1. My household receives Social Security. Y N
2. I have Internet access and an Email address that I can use. Y N
3. Zoom meetings are okay for communications with the HOA board. Y N
4. The HOA board should return to in-person meetings. Y N
5. The siding on my HOA unit needs to be replaced ASAP. Y N
6. The siding on my HOA unit needs to be repaired, but not replaced. Y N
7. Our monthly dues are too high for an HOA without amenities. Y N
8. Multi-year special assessments will impact my ability to sell my unit. Y N
9. I agree with Ed and believe we should live within our current budget. Y N
10. I agree with Bob, and all quad building siding should now be replaced. Y N
11. I can afford the following increase in monthly HOA dues for the next 3-5 years so that new siding can be installed on the remaining twenty-one quad buildings.  
\$0 \$50 \$100 \$200 \$300 \$400 \$500
12. If a multi-year special assessment vote is presented, I will vote for it. Y N

Sincerely yours,

HOA Address



Edward G. Palmer

8303 Oakview Court  
Maple Grove, MN 55369  
edwardgpalmer@gmail.com  
763-370-8227

## **PS - How can you return your survey?**

1. Mail the survey to the above address.
2. Take a photo with a smartphone and text it.
3. Take a photo and email the survey to me.
4. Drive or walk to my home and give it to me.
5. Call me and make arrangements for me to pick it up.

## **Envisioning A Better HOA**

It's really not difficult to envision a better HOA. It would involve some of the following characteristics.

1. All Officers and Directors would be identified along with their contact data.
2. HOA members would be allowed to contact Officers and Directors if needed.
3. Maintenance requests would be easy to report and then promptly addressed.
4. HOA members would be able to track their maintenance request progress.
5. Board approval of maintenance requests would be within 1-2 days.
6. The Secretary could immediately post their minutes and make them available.
7. Meeting minutes would not exclude homeowner discussions as they now do.
8. There would be no gatekeeper between the HOA Board and its members.
9. Over 90% of all activities would be online and not controlled outside the HOA.

**All of the above items are easy to implement online using modern HOAworks software, which puts an HOA's board in direct control of its operations, saves board members time, and minimizes the need for any outside company to control issues. Visit <https://hoa.works/> and request a demo to understand how to modernize HOA management. Yes, our HOA board's operations are now considered antiquated, costlier, and more time-consuming than they need to be for unpaid board Officers and Directors. Yes, our HOA can be improved.**

## **Are Kraus and Omega Being Transparent?**

On August 6, I sent a letter to Robert Kraus, HOA president, requesting that he release the June 2025 second siding legal opinion letter to me. He has refused to release the contents of this legal letter regarding the installation of new siding on our buildings. Something is being concealed from HOA members. Omega was copied, and USPS indicates Omega received the letter. Kraus has refused delivery. **Paraphrasing Article 8.5 of our By-Laws, "All HOA records shall be available for all HOA members to review."** The August 6 letter to Kraus is attached. Go to <http://www.pineview-hoa.org> for other documentation and information.